

A
CHARGE
Deliver'd to the
CLERGY
OF THE
ARCH-DEACONRY
OF
MIDDLESEX.

At his Primary Visitation.

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Deacon of Middlesex.

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A
C H A R G E
Deliver'd to the
C L E R G Y, &c.



THE Divine Dispensation,
by the Appointment of
our Right Reverend Dio-
cesan, having plac'd me
in this Office and Station
amongst you; I make it
my first Request to you, my Reverend
Brethren, that we may all of us, with an
unanimous Concern, use our Joint-Endea-
vours for the Maintenance and Support of

the true Interest, of that holy Apostolical Religion which we of the Reform'd Church of *England* do profess.

I look upon these Meetings to be the Remainder of the ancient Diocesan Synods, in which the Affairs of the Church us'd to be manag'd by a common Consultation, according to such Laws and Rules as had been agreed upon by larger Synods, or directed by superiour Authority; and in which all Grievances, Irregularities, Enormities, or Defects whatsoever us'd to meet with a suitable Redress.

I cannot suffer my self to enter upon the Supposition, that we shall meet with much Employment of the latter kind amongst you, my Reverend Brethren, whilst Learning and Piety, and all the Qualifications necessary for the Support of the Sacred Polity, do so eminently flourish in the *English* Clergy even to the Envy of the Christian World: and therefore do desire to meet you always in the Synodical Capacity, that by our joint Consultations we may be better enabled, within those Limits committed to us, to communicate our Thoughts with one another, and by taking sweet Counsel together, enter into *the House of God as Friends.*

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The Difficulty of the Times, the Militant State of the Church, the Number, the Power, the Variety, the Subtlety of her Enemies are such, as do require the best collected Strength we have to be able to stand this spiritual Warfare, and having done all, to stand. Our holy Labour in this kind, as I am sure it will be acceptable, so I hope may be in some Measure subservient to ease that great Burden which lies upon our Superiors; and if we can be useful to the curing those Distractions which are thrown in among our People, we may by that Means make the Wheels of Government move more easie both in Church and State.

Upon this View it is I would at present offer to your best Thoughts some few Hints which, I hope, may be usefully improv'd by you, towards the settling and quieting a Controversie thrown in among us, concerning Church-Powers and the Exercise of them, which does sensibly affect the Peace of our holy Communion, and disturbs the Minds of even very many good Men.

It is asserted on one Hand, that there are no Powers in the Church, but what
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are deriv'd to it by the Civil Authority. Others affirm such an independent Power to the Church as does necessarily interfere with the Divine Commission granted to the secular Magistrate: The first of these deny to God that which is God's, the other deny to *Cæsar*, that which is *Cæsar's*. To set our selves right therefore between these interfering Claims, we may, I think, usefully consider these Matters following.

First, When our Saviour distinguisheth his Kingdom from the Kingdoms of this World, it is, I think, very evident he does assert a Kingdom to himself. The Affairs of which must be govern'd in a different Manner from those of the Temporal Powers; and the Difference will best appear from a distinct View of those Ends, for the compassing of which, these Powers were granted.

'Tis agreed on all Hands the two great Ends of God Almighty's Creation were, the Manifestation of his own Glory, and the Happiness of his Creatures. The Glory of his Majesty stands fixt from everlasting to everlasting, and we can neither add to, nor diminish from
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it. 'Tis our only Duty to make our Acknowledgments of it: that is the solid Foundation of religious or sacred Polity.

But the other End, the Happiness of the Creature, though it was as fixt in God Almighty's Designment, as his own Glory, and the Fulness of it does consist in the glorious Enjoyment of him; yet the Nature of a rational Creature, his very Constitution shews him to be capable of a double Notion of Happiness, for he partakes of both Natures, the mortal and the immortal, and therefore may be happy in the Enjoyment of God Almighty's Bounties, Blessings, and Favours, in this Life; and by a good Use of them may hope for the glorious Reward of everlasting Happiness in another. This points us out the different Functions of the Civil and Sacred Polity: one is to govern us in the Enjoyments of God's Blessings in this Life, the other to direct and conduct us to the Enjoyment of them in another, and both to terminate in the full and compleat Happiness of the Creature.

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This, upon the Supposition of Man's continuing that upright State of Nature in which he was created, might have contrin'd both Offices in the same Person, and accordingly we find in the earlier Ages of the World, they both of them followed the Primogeniture or Civil Sovereignty, as both sacred and prophane History bear Witness, *Melchisedek* was King of *Salem*, and Priest of the most High God.

Rex Anius, Rex idem hominum, Phæbiq; sacerdos.
Virg.

But the Corruptions of natural Religion. the Deviations of it into Idolatry, and consequently Atheism and Irreligion, brought on the Necessity of superinducing a positive, instituted, or revealed Religion, to secure the great End of the Creatures Happiness; and had not God Almighty been pleas'd of his great Mercy to give us the gracious Favour of a gratuitous Redemption, Mankind must necessarily have fallen short of the great End of their everlasting Happiness, and must as necessarily have sunk into everlasting Ruine and Misery.

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This therefore being superinduc'd upon the natural Scheme, could not proceed from the Will of Man; for the utmost Skill and Abilities of humane Nature could not either have contriv'd, or compass'd the Design of a gratuitous Redemption, and therefore we find it the first Promise given to Mankind, *the Seed of the Woman shall bruise the Serpent's Head.*

Upon this Account it necessarily follows, that the Powers requisite for conveying to us the Benefits of such a Redemption, must depend upon the positive Institutions of the Revealers Will, and if we think the Benefits and Favours of God our Redeemer to be worthy our Acceptance, we must be content to take them in his own Way.

This is so agreeable to the common Reason of Mankind, that in all the mystical or instituted Religions, even of the Heathen World, there were Powers, Persons, Places separated for the Use of Religion, different from the common and prophane; and to shew it to be a real Dictate of Nature, we find it actually true in the Priests of *Egypt* in *Joseph's* time, even

ven before the actual Separation of the Tribe of *Levi* by God himself.

Wherever therefore the Institution depends upon a divine Revelation, there the Powers necessary for conveying to us the Benefits of that Institution, must be of divine Authority, originally deriv'd from the Will of the Institutor, and continu'd to us by such Means, as he himself is pleas'd to appoint for the Conveyance of them; and all the Civil Sovereign in this Case has to do, is only this, That when he is perswaded and convinced of the Truth of the Revelation, his Duty to God his Maker, and to God his Redeemer, will oblige him to the Protection of that Truth which he is so perswaded and convinc'd of; for the Extent of his Office even upon natural Principles, reaches the Care of Religious Truth, as well as Civil Peace.

Thus we see even by the Nature of the thing, there is and must be in all divinely instituted Religion, an independent Power granted to the Officers of it for the Conveyance of its Benefits to Mankind, which is not, cannot be deriv'd from the Civil Magistrate, but yet when embrac'd by him, is entir'd to his Care and Protection.

This

This our Laws acknowledge in many Instances both in the earlier and later Times of our happy Reformation, and thus we piously and orthodoxly acknowledge our Civil Sovereign to be the Supreme Governour in all Causes, and over all Persons, as well Ecclesiastical as Temporal. For these are not thwarting or interfering Powers, but such as mutually conspire to the great End of Man's Creation, the Peace and Happiness of this Life, and the more desirable Peace and Happiness of an everlasting Life.

An independent Power therefore in the sacred Polity does not, in the Nature of it, include any thing that is contrariant to the Powers of the Civil; for we see, when by the Necessity of positive Institutions they were separated, yet they were still appointed for one common End, the *Happiness of Mankind*.

When therefore our great Redeemer came to give the World the last Reformation by his everlasting Gospel, we find both by his Commands, and by his Example, he so asserted the Divine independent Powers of the sacred Polity, as to make them useful to the Support, not tending to the Overthrow of the Civil;

this was likewise the Practice of his Apostles, and has been the common Maxim of all true orthodox Christianity.

To instance only in two of the greatest Reformers of the Civil Authority. It was *Justinian's* Maxim concerning the Sacred and Civil Polity. *Τὰ θεϊτέρα καὶ τὰ ἀνθρώπινα συνδράμονται.* *The Divine and Humane Powers must concur.* And our *Henry the Eighth*, in his Preface to the Statute of Appeals, when he has distinguish'd the Powers of the Spirituality and the Temporality, makes this his Maxim, That both their Authorities and Jurisdictions, do conjoin together, in the due Administration of Justice, the one to help the other.

And therefore I shall conclude this Point with this Assertion, That those who would make the independent Power of the Sacred Polity an Enemy to the Civil, do not understand the Nature of it, and those who are so bold as to deny it, deny to *God* that which is *Gods*.

But *Secondly*, On the other Hand, those who assert such an independent Power to the Church, as makes it interfere with the Divine Commission granted to the
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secular Magistrate, deny to *Cæsar* that which is *Cæsars*.

Christianity is said to have entered the World as the Soul does the Body, without any Alteration of its Parts, only with this Addition, that by actuating of it, it brings new Life, adds fresh Vigour and Strength to it; the Powers and Faculties of the Body Politick remain the same they were before, and neither the Sovereign Governour, nor the Subject governed, receive any other Accessions either of Power or Privilege, save only the valuable Benefits of the Means of Grace here, and the Title they gain thereby to the Hopes of Glory hereafter; these spiritual Benefits improve the Obligation, but do not alter the Nature of the Duty. They ought to make the Sovereign more careful in the Use of his Authority, for the Support and Defence of God's reveal'd Truth; and the Subject more dutiful and submissive in his Obedience, because he sees it is the Will of God that we should be subject.

Whoever therefore upon the Account of Christianity claim any Privileges or Exemptions, from any Part of the Civil Sovereign Authority which is own'd to be
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a natural Prerogative of that Authority, will find no Foundation for their Claim in the Laws of Christianity; for as the Baptism of a Sovereign, or the Admission of him into Christianity, gives him no Accession of sacred Power more than the Privileges abovemention'd, so neither does it diminish any thing from his Civil Power. Whatever was the Privilege and Prerogative of the Civil Power before, remains so still.

And this will lead us into the great Debate now amongst us, how far a *Lay-Deprivation* does extend, and how far it may be justified, where I shall endeavour to shew you

1st, That the Government is and long has been in Possession of such a Power: This will shew the Extent of it.

2^{dly}, How far it may be justify'd upon such Catholick Principles as are agreeable to both the Laws of God and Man.

1st Then, That the Government is and long has been in Possession of such a Power.

It is the undoubted just Right of Sovereign Authority not to be bounded in its
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Legislative Capacity, by any other Will, but only the superior Will of God, from whence its Authority is deriv'd. From hence ariseth what is call'd the absolute or arbitrary Legislative Power, *i. e.* a Power in the Sovereign Authority of obliging the Subject to certain Rules and Laws, of præscribing to them certain Conditions and Qualifications, either for the better Assurance of their Authority, or for the more orderly Management of their Government, and all this under such Sanctions and Penalties as to the Legislative Wisdom may seem most suitable for guarding and fencing the Authority of their Laws.

Of this kind is the Lay-Deprivation we are enquiring after; for it is no more than the Sanction or Penalty of a Law removing a Person that is subject to it, from the Possession, Enjoyment, or Exercise of any Office or Function entrusted to them by the Law, either for want of those Conditions and Qualifications which the Law requires of them, or for Neglect or Contempt of them, or for some Crimes committed which are inconsistent with them.

This will appear better from an Instance or two of our own Laws; when the Sovereign

raign Authority of this Nation thought fit to declare against the Usurpations of Foreign Power. To assert the natural Supremacy, and guard the Assertion of it. they thought fit to oblige the Subject by the solemn Assurance of an Oath, call'd *The Oath of Supremacy*, as we find 1^o. *Eliz. cap. 1^o*. The Penalty of refusing the Oath was, as by the enacting Clause is express'd; *That if any Arch-Bishop, Bishop, or other Ecclesiastical Officer or Minister; or any temporal Judge, Justiciary, or other Lay-Officer or Minister, shall peremptorily or obstinately refuse to take or receive the said Oath, that then he so refusing, shall forfeit and lose, only during his Life, all and every Ecclesiastical and Spiritual Promotion, Benefice, and Office, and every Temporal and Lay-Promotion and Office which he hath solely at the Time of such Refusal made; and the whole Title, Interest, and Incumbency in every such Promotion, Benefice, and Office, shall clearly cease and be void, as though the Party so refusing were dead.* This Instance we see equally affects the Officers of the Civil and the Sacred Polity, the Refusal of those Conditions and Qualifications the Law requires from them, removes them from the Possession and Exercise, the Benefits

nefits and Advantages, of those Offices, Promotions, or Preferments they had, as if they had been actually remov'd by Death, but does not bring any further Disability upon, either their Function or Character.

But the Force and Extent of this Lay-Deprivation will appear yet plainer in some other Instances of our Law, which concern the Ecclesiastical Officer only, The 13 Eliz. cap. 12. entitl'd *An Act for Ministers of the Church to be of sound Religion*; and the 13 Car. II. entitl'd, *An Act for the Uniformity of Publick Prayers, and Administration of Sacraments*; do both of them require from the Ecclesiastical Officer, after a Plenarty of Possession by Institution and Induction, some certain Conditions and Qualifications; the first, the *Subscribing, Reading, and Declaring unfeigned Assent to the Thirty Nine Articles*. The other, a *Declaration of his unfeigned Assent and Consent to all and every thing contain'd in the Book of Common Prayer*. The Neglect or Refusal of which Conditions notwithstanding the Plenarty of an Ecclesiastical Possession, do put the Incumbent under the Penalty of a Deprivation *ipso facto*, and give the Patron leave to present

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sent a new one, as if the Person so offending or neglecting were dead; and yet the same Patron may again present the same Person to the same Incumbency, or any other; who if he does upon his second Presentation duly qualifie himself, may, without any new Ordination, fully possess and exercise his Office, and enjoy the Benefits and Advantages of it.

Which is, I think, a plain Evidence that the Lay-Deprivation does not affect the true independent Power of the Church. The Power of Orders, of administering the Word and Sacraments, and all the consequential spiritual Benefits, intended to be deriv'd to Mankind by them, are un- touch'd by it, and may be exercis'd by any of our separating Brethren to whom they have been regularly convey'd, whenever they please to qualifie themselves according to the Laws, for the due and orderly Exercise and Administration of them.

There will need therefore no great Apology for the Exercise of this Power of a Lay-Deprivation, when it has been already hinted, that 'tis no more than the Exercise of such a Power, as does necessarily arise from that Supremacy which does

does naturally belong to all Sovereign Authority; and is declar'd by our Church in her Thirty Seventh Article to be, That only Prerogative which we see to have been given always to all godly Princes in holy Scripture by God himself; that is, that they should rule all Estates and Degrees committed to their Charge by God, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Temporal, and restrain with the Civil Sword the Stubborn and Evil-Doers.

We do not want Examples or Precedents of the Exercise of this Power either under the *Jewish* or the Christian State in those purer Times of it, before the exorbitant Claims of an irregular independent Power were corruptly brought in upon us; but they are too long at present to be insisted on, and may be seen in the Disputes on both Sides.

What I would conclude from what has been already hinted is only this, That there is an independent Power in the Church which cannot proceed from the Will of Man, but must be delegated to her by God our Redeemer, in order to conduct Mankind to the great End of their Being, eternal Happiness, and is

given not for the Destruction of the Civil, but for the Edification of the Sacred Polity.

For these Powers neither in their Nature do, nor in their Exercise ought to clash or interfere with one another; but both of them would mutually conspire, to support that Authority of the Laws of God, which was intended for the Happiness of Mankind; for as *St. Paul* assures us, they are both of them *the Ministers of God* for the Good of Mankind.

The Separation of the Powers was we see introduc'd by the Necessity of super-inducing a reveal'd instituted Religion; but yet the Support and Maintenance, the Care and Protection of that reveal'd Truth, is still a Duty incumbent on the Civil Sovereign if he will own either God his Creator, or God his Redeemer. The Peace of this World, and the Peace of another, are not inconsistent things, we are commanded to *submit to the King as Supreme, to Governours as sent by him*, and this we are told is *the Will of God*. And therefore whatever is the Property of Civil Sovereignty ought to be the most sacred to us, and nothing less than the reveal'd

veal'd Will of God, can justifie us in a Non-Submission, or Refusal to obey it.

This makes the Dispute amongst us about the Power of a Lay-Deprivation the more unreasonable. 'Tis evident it is a Branch of Power arising from the Nature of Civil Sovereignty, 'tis evident we are not without Precedents and Examples for the Exercise of it, 'tis evident our own Laws do assert it. And if all this may be thought sufficient for the Justification of it, upon this bottom 'tis evident further, that upon Church-Principles we may vindicate our holy Communion from the heavy Charge and Guilt of Schism; for thus 'tis plain we have not betray'd the true independent Powers of the Church.

And when our Adversaries are pleas'd to justifie their Breach of Communion from the Irregularities, or Immoralities, as they are pleas'd to call them, of the Revolution, we may tell them, those Difficulties are not properly the Province of the Church. And need only observe further, that when *St. Paul*, under *Nero*, had fixt the Duty of Submission to the Civil Power, though there happen'd immediately afterward, the most rapid, sudden, and violent Revolutions that ever beset the *Roman* Em-

Empire, yet these Revolutions, in the Civil State, gave no Disturbance to the Peace of the Church, and without considering whether the Sword or Senate gave the Title to the Purple, these Com-motions made no Breach in the Christian Communion.

But a great Leader in this Dispute is pleas'd to tell us, the Schism did not commence from thence, no not even from the Deprivation of the Bishops, when they were outed by Act of Parliament; but from the Consecration of new Bishops, for then was Altar set up against Altar, and Bishops intruded into full Sees, *Pontif and Regal. p. 75.* To this we may answer in the Words of our own Law, *39 Eliz. cap. 8. That the Sees of Archbishoprick or Bishoprick of any Archbishop or Bishop depriv'd, shall be deem'd and adjudg'd to be meerly void to all Respects and Purposes, before the Presentment, Appointment, or Assignment of any other.*

And therefore if the solemn Declarations of our own Laws, made so long before the Occasion of this Dispute arose, may weigh more with us than the private Opinions of Men prejudic'd to their own Cause; the new consecrated Bishops did not set up

up Altar against Altar, but only took Possession of an unpossess'd Altar, did not intrude into full Sees, but were consecrated to vacated, and meerly void Sees.

But *lastly*, 'tis true indeed, whilst we must believe our Creed, teaching us there is but one holy Catholick Church, one Communion of Saints; wherever there is a Separation of Communion, there must be Schism on the one Side or the other; but then, I think, it is agreed among us, That the Charge and Guilt of Schism must lie there, where the causless Separation does. And I hope by what has been hinted to you, it may be sufficiently prov'd,

That their Separation is wholly causless.



F I N I S.

